



MICHIGAN TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL (MTAC)

Meeting Minutes

Ralph A. MacMullan Center

104 Conservation Drive

Roscommon, MI 48653

Date: June 27, 2023

Time: 1 – 4:30 p.m.

Welcome – Roll Call

PRESENT FOR THE MICHIGAN TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL

- Brian Beauchamp, Chairperson
- Kenneth Hopper, Vice Chairperson
- Michael Maves (virtual)
- Mark Losey (virtual)
- Ryan Laporte (virtual)
- Jason Aric Jones
- Richard Williamson
- Jenny Cook
- Amy Scharmen-Burgdolf
- Karen Middendorp
- Tavon Brooks (absent)

PRESENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR) STAFF

- Tim Novak, Annalisa Centofanti, Greg Kinser, Ron Yesney, Peter Costa, Jill Sell, Paige Perry, Lee Maynard, Sage Hegdal, Nicole Hunt, Kristin Wildman, Madison Janes,

Meeting minutes

Meeting called to order at 1:03 p.m. by Chair, Brian Beauchamp.

Council and DNR staff introductions.

ACTION ITEMS

Motion was made to approve the March 23 meeting minutes by Karen Middendorp and seconded by Richard Williamson, with all in favor. Motion carried.

Motion was made to approve the June 27 agenda by Ken Hopper and seconded by Jason Aric Jones, with all in favor. Motion carried.

Brian Beauchamp requested an update on a previous agenda item regarding Proud Lake mountain bike trails. Tim Novak, DNR, said the trails have been properly signed and park staff is working with the Motor City Mountain Biking Association (MCMBA) on development of a second loop.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

BUSINESS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

THUNDER VALLEY TRAIL LAND USE ORDER OF THE DIRECTOR (LUOD)

Nicole Hunt, DNR, provided an update regarding a proposed LUOD. Issues occurring on the Thunder Valley Trail in the Upper Peninsula with equestrians and mountain bike users questioned compatibility between the groups using the same trail. The draft LUOD proposes to close a portion of the Cedar River North Trail and Thunder Valley Trail to bicycle use. This same draft was presented at the April Nonmotorized Advisory Workgroup (NAW) meeting. From the discussions had at the NAW meeting, it is determined that further conversations need to happen between the Equine Trails Subcommittee (ETS) and NAW members over the Thunder Valley Trail. There were no concerns over the Cedar River North Trail proposed restriction of bike use. The Department will move forward with the LUOD with just the Cedar River North Trail until issues and concerns can be resolved for the Thunder Valley trail.

Jason Aric Jones agrees with the proposed Cedar River Trail LUOD and identifies that more discussion surrounding Thunder Valley Trail need to take place with a workable solution between equestrians and mountain bikers.

Amy Scharmen-Burgdolf said this is the only equestrian trail in the area, around eleven miles. Mountain bikers have over one hundred and fifty miles of trails in this area. The trails need to be separated.

Jenny Cook added that multi-use trails can create challenges for riders and is a safety concern for both users.

Ron Yesney, DNR, appreciates the equestrians concerns and noted the history for the Thunder Valley Trail was developed for equestrian use.

Nicole Hunt finalized the conversation by recommending that ETS and NAW set up a meeting to flush out concerns.

MOTION

Motion was made by Jenny Cook and seconded by Amy Scharmen-Burgdolf and Jason Aric Jones for the NAW and ETS to meet and discuss the concerns over the Thunder Valley Trail separation with the presence of DNR staff to facilitate the meeting. All in favor. Motion carried.

RECREATION TRAIL PROGRAM (RTP) ANNUAL PROJECT REVIEW

Lee Maynard, DNR, presented the RTP FY2023 Project List (see attached).

Jason Aric Jones asked how the project list decisions are made. Lee replied they are driven from DNR field staff. Jason would like to see more involvement and input by trail users and external stakeholders. Jason suggested formally changing the process to include a call period for ideas and concepts to ensure the public gets what public wants.

Amy Scharmen-Burgdolf asked if these funds apply to equine projects and suggested communicating the project list to the all the trail subcommittees.

Lee clarified that these projects are internal grants and not public facing. The public will need to work with DNR field staff for project proposal consideration. The projects are initiated internally.

Jason Aric Jones added that more RTP funds need to be spent on natural surface nonmotorized trails. The DNR needs to recognize this type of dirt as infrastructure.

Ken Hopper suggested as part of the process, filtering the project list between trail user groups and the DNR to avoid any criticism from the public.

Greg Kinser, DNR, explained RTP federal government funds are passed through the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). MDOT has the responsibility to ensure the funds are spent properly. There are several layers and filters internally in place with the involvement of several State of Michigan (SOM) departments and federal guidelines.

LONG TERM REVENUE FUNDING NONMOTORIZED

Brian Beauchamp understands that there is no specific funding generated for nonmotorized trail use. Brian added this topic to the agenda to spark conversation and ideas on how to generate a revenue stream.

Jenny Cook mentioned a recent study for bridal tags as revenue showed very positive results. Equestrians welcomed a bridal tag fee and a survey taken several years ago indicated 80% will pay.

Jason Aric Jones was part of workgroup that looked at solutions for nonmotorized funding. Jason is not in favor of the term nonmotorized and feels it is a catch all for all trail types. The costs to maintain all these trail types vary. First steps are to identify the costs for each recreation and the number of users, then zone in on revenue ideas.

Ken Hopper thought the workgroup was not diverse enough to represent across all nonmotorized trail users.

Jenny Cook asked what happened to the proposed paddle fee that was presented by the DNR a couple years back. Ron Yesney replied that the paddle fee was not supported by legislation.

Paige Perry, DNR, added that MSU has completed trail use studies and suggested to look into the results.

Brian Beauchamp asked how MTAC can move forward to make a recommendation of this revenue need for nonmotorized trails. Ken Hopper recommended working outside of the regular quarterly MTAC meetings. Create a workgroup and include members from each subcommittee.

Jason Aric Jones repeated his first step is to identify the costs for each recreation and the number of users, then zone in on revenue ideas.

Mark Losey asked who will be an advocate on the legislative side.

Tim Novak stated the DNR does not lobby legislation.

Brian Beauchamp proposed to assemble a workgroup from to include members from the NAW and ETS to research what is happening in other states and bring forth to MTAC the concepts and ideas. Brian and Tim will work to organize a group and hope to have a recommendation in the next year.

*Rolling agenda item - Nonmotorized Funding Revenue Workgroup

UPDATES

ALLEGAN STATE GAME AREA (ASGA)

Kristin Wildman, Wildlife (WLD) DNR, stated Allegan County Parks and Recreation released a resolution in support of recreational bicycle and cross-country ski trails in the ASGA. Kristin clarified that there has been constant regular communication between Rob Allen and the WLD staff regarding the ASGA proposal. In Dec. 2021 WLD formed a workgroup with the purpose to address present and proposed recreational bike use in state game areas in Michigan. The workgroup consulted with outside experts and accomplished and completed their fact-finding assignment. In order to produce a summary report, the assignment included completing a state game area bike trail inventory and conducting structured interviews with other states. WLD and MSU are currently in discussions regarding projects to study the impacts of traditional and nontraditional use of state lands in SGA. A workgroup status update was provided to WLD management team in May 2022 to allow more time to develop recommendations. In March 2023, a menu of five possible recommendation categories with associated pros and cons were presented to WLD management. As of right now, the WLD management teams' direction is not to create additional recreational bike areas in state game areas. The WLD management team is asking a smaller group to research and develop land use guidelines outlining where and under what conditions recreational bike use may be allowed on state game areas in coordination with recreational hunting and trapping. The DNR local biologist is still in conversations with Rob Allen. Mountain bikers are still using the trails at the ASGA with no plans to change the current trail use. State game areas accounts for ten percent of the state lands in Michigan.

Tim Novak thanked Kristin for the update. We understand this is a complicated issue and know this takes time to make these types of decisions. The collaboration is appreciated between the DNR divisions to work through this proposal.

Rob Allen commented adding he did not discuss with the DNR WLD biologist other aspects of the trail proposal. Rob asked if WLD read the proposal and knows how many square acres the present bike trail encompasses as opposed to how many miles the new trail will encompass. Rob finds there is no policy to deal with unsafe trails in the state game areas. The outlined trail proposal outlines a safety policy.

Kristin stated the bike trails on ASGA are not designated bike trails. WLD is not funded or staffed with the expertise to manage and maintain or allow bike trails on state game area lands.

Jason Aric Jones added that natural surface nonmotorized trails need to be addressed with policy changes within WLD and stewardship.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE (USFS)

Connor Landeck, USFS, provided a couple project updates on USFS lands. Marzinski Horse and Trail Camp is now on the reservation system. This will allow equine users with large trailers to get site specific areas large enough to accommodate their rigs.

Currently, the USFS is in partnership with MSU to research trail sustainability for the Manistee River Trail Loop, assessing the physical and social conditions of the trail. USFS is fully staffed for trails.

Amy Scharmen-Burgdolf asked if all horse trail camps will be on the reservation system. Connor said yes, over time.

Karen Middendorp asked to clarify where to send the completed trail bridge inspection report. Connor said to send the reports to him or the field engineer.

MTAC RESTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Tim Novak will be working with Brian Beauchamp to form a subcommittee. A survey was sent to MTAC members, and those people will be contacted. The hope is to present a resolution in the next year.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Equine Trails Subcommittee (ETS) – Jenny Cook (report attached)

Jenny reported in May ETS members met with DNR staff for a horse meet and greet at Brighton Riding Stables, which followed up by the ETS quarterly meeting. Amy Scharmen-Burgdolf maintains the online Michigan Horse Directory. Trails Common Ground national campaign offering a quiz to test your trail knowledge of trails for all user groups. A recent webinar took place with American Trails that featured the trails safe passing plan (YEILD PLAN). Education is important along with positive experiences.

Non-motorized Advisory Workgroup (NAW) – Jason Aric Jones

Jason reported two draft LUOD's were presented regarding ebikes and trail separation of Thunder Valley. A motion was passed regarding ebike proposed policy changes or LUOD's are to go through the ebike workgroup and NAW for review, which than will be sent up to MTAC. Discussions and several motions were made regarding Thunder Valley LUOD neither of the motions passed.

Snowmobile Advisory Workgroup (SAW) – Karen Middendorp

Karen reported that Jason Fleming, DNR, introduced a draft LUOD to restrict snowmobile use in some sensitive areas in state parks. The committee discussed allowing grant sponsors to receive a stipend for oil maintenance. Snowmobile sound enforcement is hard to enforce. The way the law is written needs to be changed to what the current level is and how testing is conducted. Private landowners are pulling permission due to noise levels. SAW is in support of restricting wheeled vehicles on freshly groomed trails, house bill is in legislation for review. Snow program purchased four temporary bridges. The Lake Linden project is moving forward and making progress. Miners Castle Trail is still waiting on an official attorney general opinion.

Off Road Vehicle Advisory Workgroup (ORVAW) – Mike Maves

Mike Maves reported the committee talked about purchasing snow grade equipment. The ORV Sunset Bill has been voted on and approved, with the removal of the sunset language. Hiawatha connectors have been completed. House bill for wheeled access limits access on freshly groomed snow trails is in legislation for review and not voted on. Karen Middendorp added there is an exemption in the house bill which allows accessibility.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION FEEDBACK

Tim Novak received feedback from the attendees of the new member orientation sessions hosted by the DNR a few months back. The overall view is that the orientation was very helpful. The DNR will offer this annually and will add some features from suggestions received. In summary, this helped new and current members understand processes, roles, and expectations.

Jenny Cook suggested adding funding and where the money comes from to the orientation, so everyone has a better understanding.

2023 MEETINGS

Sept. 28 – Grayling Township Hall

Dec. 12 - RAM

CLOSING/ROUND ROBIN

Karen Middendorp likes the movement of this committee and would like to see continued action. Everyone needs to work together for all our best interests.

Brian Beauchamp recognized there is a lot of passion within this group.

James Maike, public comment, expressed the ORV sales has increased over the last few years. Lack of education has caused issues and problems. All trail subcommittees need to work together on a safety policy. The trails are being torn up. Lastly, the ORV Equipment Subcommittee is exploring revenue avenues to purchase trail grooming equipment.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Recreational Trails Program FY24 Project List

Michigan Trails Advisory Council

June 27, 2023

Lee Maynard (she/her(s))

Non-motorized Grant
Coordinator



RTP Overview

RTP is a federal opt-in program

RTP funds are reimbursement grants for projects that have demonstrated a commitment to follow Federal Aid spending requirements

RTP funding, as part of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), is apportioned and obligated through the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)

MDOT and DNR work collaboratively to program and track grants given

DNR's RTP Coordinator works with DNR Trails staff to align priority projects with the appropriate funding source

RTP Trail Use Funding



**Annual apportionment of
around \$2,800,000.00 of
new funds**



**Existing balance of funds
\$7.1 million**



**Balance of trail use
types:**

30% Nonmotorized

30% Motorized

40% Diversified trail use



**Administration and
safety**

7% currently used annually to
administer the program

5% can be obligated for safety and
education projects



RTP Project List Development

- ▶ The RTP program presents an annual project list to the RTP advisory committee, MTAC curated from a 3-5 year RTP project list.
- ▶ RTP Projects are typically generated by Trail Specialists with review, discussion and approval of Trail Coordinators, NMGC and MDOT
- ▶ Trail Project Considerations:
 - ▶ Trail use(s)
 - ▶ Project Timeline
 - ▶ Federal funding compliance
 - ▶ Diversity of project types
 - ▶ Project Budget
 - ▶ Geographic spread of projects



FY 2023 Project List

- ▶ Trails Infrastructure Inventory, State-wide (PE)
- ▶ Proud Lake Boardwalk, SE (CON)
- ▶ Days River Pathway, CUP (CON)
- ▶ CIS Trail Surface Reconstruction, SW (CON)
- ▶ BVT Manistee River Bridge, NWLP (CON)
- ▶ Cadillac Pathway Singletrack, NWLP (CON)
- ▶ Musketawa Trail Redevelopment, SW (CON)
- ▶ Genes Pond Pathway, CUP (CON)
- ▶ Stateline Grade, WUP (CON)
- ▶ Agate River Bridge repair on Bergland to Sidnaw Grade, WUP (CON)
- ▶ Iosco Exploration Trail, NELP (CON)
- ▶ Iron Belle Trail Kirtland Community College, NELP (CON)



FY 2024 Project List

- ▶ GIS Infrastructure Inventory, State-wide (non-infrastructure)
- ▶ Rifle River Trail Bridge Replacement
- ▶ Hartwick Pines Old Growth Trail
- ▶ NCT Baxter Bridge to High Rollaway Improvements
- ▶ Lakeshore Trail at Holy Recreation Area
- ▶ Proud Lake Boardwalk Replacements
- ▶ Jonesville Bridge Repair or Replacement
- ▶ Minor's River Bridge
- ▶ Caspian River Bridge deck replacement
- ▶ Jumbo River Bridge deck replacement
- ▶ Holland to Ottawa Connector
- ▶ Betsie Valley Trail Trestle Bridge
- ▶ Watkins Lake Rail Trail
- ▶ White Pine Bridge Replacement



FY 2024 Proposed Obligations

FY 2024 RTP Project List

7% for RTP Program Administration

Trail Projects are programmed and project packages are submitted for MDOT approval

Projects from 2022-2023 as they become ready to move from design to construction

- Prioritized projects from previous slide

Implemented in partnership with MDOT and Consultant Team



Questions and comments?

Thank you!

Lee Maynard
Nonmotorized Trails Grant Coordinator

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Maynardl1@michigan.gov

MTAC June 27, 2023, Equestrian Report

We are thankful for a wonderful day learning many interesting facts about horses, the benefits horses provide for people, and even enjoying horseback trail rides at Brighton Riding Stables in Brighton Recreational Area with ETS members, DNR management teams, and MTAC member, Mark Losey.



Michigan Horse Trails Directory Calendar of Events for the remaining of 2023:

JULY

- 8-9: [GLDRA](#) AHAM Endurance Ride at Hopkins Creek
- 15: [GLDRA](#) Distance Riding Clinic Classroom Holiday Inn Brighton
- 22-23: [MICMO](#) Horses for Hope Everett A. Cummings Center
- 29: [Hungerford Trail Riders](#) Christmas in July Ride

AUGUST

- 5-12: [MTRA](#) August Family Ride
- 11-12: [GLDRA](#) Detroit Horse Power Distance Ride - Kensington and Proud Lake trail
- 19: [Hungerford Trail Riders](#) Poker Ride
- 19: [GLDRA](#) Mock Distance Riding Clinic Brighton Rec

SEPTEMBER

- 1-4: [Sleepy Hollow Trail Riders](#) Labor Day Weekend Camp
- 2: [Yankee Springs](#) Annual Meeting
- 2-4: [GLDRA](#) White River Labor Day Endurance Ride at Timber's Edge
- 7-18: [MTRA](#) Shore to Shore September Ride
- 8-10: [Highland Trail Riders](#) Horseshoe Hunt Fall Camp
- 9: [Ortonville Rec Eq Friends](#) Judged Trail Ride
- 9-10: [GLDRA](#) Keweenaw Endurance Ride at Marquette
- 9-10: [MICMO](#) Just for Fun CMO at Yankee Springs
- 14-17: [Fort Custer Horse Friends](#) Fall Camp
- 15-17: [Pontiac Lake Horseman](#) Tour the Trails Fall Camp
- 16: [Brighton Trail Riders](#) Poker Ride
- 16: [Hungerford Trail Riders](#) J+M Camp Picnic Ride
- 16: [Muskegon County Trail Riders](#) Horses for Hospice
- 23: [Cheff Ride-a-Thon](#) Benefit Ride
- 22-24: [Proud Lake Trail Riders/Kensington Trail Riders](#) Circle Ride
- 29-1: [MHC](#) Statewide Trail Ride Banquet at D bar D
- 30-1: [GLDRA](#) Distance Riding Clinic at Cedar Creek Crossings

OCTOBER

- 6-8: [MICMO](#) Mane 2 Tail Connection 4-H Club Pontiac Lake
- 7: [Ionia Horse Trails Association](#) Annual Chili Cookoff

7-15: MTRA October Color Ride

7: Autumn on the Polly Ann Trail

14: Yankee Springs Halloween Spooktacular

14-15: GLDRA Oak Leaf Run Endurance Ride at Silver Creek

14: Hungerford Trail Riders Spooktacular

22: Maybury Trail Riders Spooktacular

21: Muskegon County Trail Riders Fall Fun Ride

26-29: Sleepy Hollow Trail Riders Explore The Hollow Weekend Camp

26-29: Addison Oaks Trail Riders Camp 'N Ride

28: Horses for Hope Halloween Ride at Cummings Center

November

1-30: Michigan Shoreline Horseback Riding Season For info on the DNR shoreline riding season

3-5: Waterloo Horseman Turkey Trot

11: Hungerford Trail Riders Banquet

DECEMBER

2: Fort Custer Horse Friends Holiday Party

Check out the Trails are Common Ground – “Test Your Trail Knowledge” Quiz featuring the Trails Safe Passing Plan of Stop! Speak and Stand Back to yield to people with horses:

<https://trailsarecommonground.org/or22quiz/>



**Please Remember
The Trails Safe Passing Plan
Stop! Speak and Stand Back**



STOP:
Horses are prey animals and naturally can be afraid of unfamiliar people and objects. People with horses should pass at a walk while other trail users remain STOPPED, until passed. When approaching horses from behind, please STOP! SPEAK to announce your location and pass slowly when the people with horses are prepared. STOPPING allows TIME for everyone to prepare for safe trail passing.

SPEAK:
Please ANNOUNCE your presence.
Please SAY “Hi” when we pass by.
Speaking helps horses identify you as a person and will help keep them calm.

STAND BACK:
Please STAND BACK with your whole group on the same side of the trail.
Please contain children and dogs.
Please do not hide or stand behind a tree, as these actions may cause horses to fear you are a predator planning an attack.

SMILE:
Enjoy the safe, happy trails! Please contact the Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council for the use of the Stop! Speak and Stand Back sign at: RFVHC.Colorado@gmail.com

Some interesting comments from the American Trails March 30, 2023, webinar where several states have signed up for the RFVHC Trails Sign and Trails Safe Passing Plan (TSPP) Stop! Speak and Stand Back:

Alaska -

We plan to have signs posted on stock use trails and use in educational presentations to other user groups.

Many people do not know what to do when they encounter livestock on the trail. We hope that educational materials such as these will bring more awareness and keep trails safer.

California -

Significant increase in trail usage since covid, particularly fast-moving mountain bikes who are forcing horses from trails that they previously used.

These signs offer practical information on how to behave around horses rather than simply stating yielding rules (triangle signs).

They are a huge improvement on what we have at present time, and I would like to make the case for replacing our current signage. We have had to offer to provide our own signs in the past and may have to do so in this case.

East Bay Regional Parks is introducing a pilot scheme for alternating trail usage at the weekend due to the pressure of mountain bike use in Briones Regional Park. This is an attempt to mitigate the environmental damage done by illegal 'bootleg' trails which have sprung up.

Marin Horse Council have a 'Stop and Say Hello' program which involves 'pop up' events to foster trail user relations and education.

Colorado -

Would like to hand out brochures or put this logo on the back of a business card to hand to users at trailhead and on the trail. We are also researching additional funding programs for classic 3-way yield sign and may want to produce these signs as well.

Multi-use issues, especially with mountain bikes and e-bikes. QR code is a great addition. We find the vast majority of users are respectful and courteous, but just don't know what actions to take. This campaign will greatly help.

We may utilize the Trails Safe Passing Plan (TSPP) Stop! Speak and Stand Back trail signs as educational tools for our clubs and organization so we can learn about your programs.

Getting more people to learn about the work you are doing.

The trail sign, the QR codes and the Trails Safe Passing Plan (TSPP) at trail heads and kiosks will help folks know how to behave and get along with other user groups.

In Southern Colorado, USFS/BLM/equestrians, user conflicts and lack of education, helping reduce conflict among user groups on our shared trails.

Florida -

Increasing bicycle traffic on the trails, electric bikes, and hover boards, so a safe yielding plan is needed. We work with public land managers at federal, state, regional, county and city government levels to plan, construct, and maintain trails.

Maryland -

We plan to put the sign on the trail's stewardship section of our website (under construction) and publish it in the Trails Stewardship section of our trade magazine, The Equiery.

Our goal would be to educate trail riders and trail managers about how to minimize conflicts between the public and trail riders.

Many of Maryland's equestrian trails are now being used by mountain bikers and adaptive bike riders. The biking community has limited education on how horses react to bicycles and people coming up behind them.

The Maryland General Assembly has passed several bills in recent years to fund more trails.

We are the trade association for the entire Maryland horse industry and most horse riders in Maryland are trail riders. Making sure they can continue to use Maryland extensive system of equestrian trails safely is an important part of our mission.

Michigan -

This park is managed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The trails are specifically designated for horses with no motorized vehicles allowed. We do share the trails with many hikers.

We would like two signs, one to post on the main campground information board and one to post at the trail head.

So many hikers, while attempting to be polite, just are not aware of proper trail etiquette, especially to "Speak". I believe posting these two signs in these locations will allow all of us to better share the trails.

Our organization is continually expanding our trail system within the park.

On behalf of our group, we are improving recreational trail safety in our region. We are seeking permission to use the Trail Sign RFLHC on our trails, in publications, websites and meetings.

The work will be used in the following manner: Place signs throughout the campground. There is no specific land use order for the horse camp. We have many different users. This will help educate other users in regard to horses.

Nevada -

I am using this as a teaching tool on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

It will improve interaction between trail users of varying types and provide education about right of way and etiquette in the presence of horses.

North Carolina -

We have a new trail system being developed and education is needed. Many of the mountain bikers are not at all familiar with what yielding means. Your trail sign is GENIUS. We hope, with the USFS endorsement of it, that it will help.

It would be so cool to be able to have the land manager's logo added to the signs. If someone sees a sign on the USFS without the USFS logo, they are less likely to think it is official.

We had a problem with e-bikes and one wheelers on our non-motorized trails. A sign was put up without the USFS logo on it and it was ignored. Then the USFS added their logo to it and now it is being considered official. Nice idea to add their logo to the side.

Ohio

We might utilize the Trails Safe Passing Plan (TSPP) Stop! Speak and Stand Back trail sign for Earth Day outreach to the public.

We have had signs made up at a park we ride at that say: See a horse? Say Hay!

Oregon -

We plan to post these at the trailhead kiosks on the non-motorized trail systems that our association maintains and partners with BLM in developing, improving, and maintaining.

Bicycles are becoming more numerous on our non-moto trails every year. They often go too fast for the safety of equestrians and some equestrians have stopped using our trail systems because of this.

I hope that with this prominent and clear signage, bicyclists will become more aware that they need to keep their speed down on these trails. In our area there are other trail systems that are specifically for bicycles, and they can go there to go fast if they want speed.

Most of our trailheads are remote and lack good cell coverage, so the QR codes may not be of much help, at least initially. When coverage improves, they can work.

Siskiyou Upland Trails Association (SUTA) partners with the BLM to develop, enhance, and maintain our trail systems - the Sterling Mine Ditch Trail and the Jack-Ash trail. We have an EA that has approved the construction of 10 more miles of trail over the next couple of years. We just received a grant for 5 miles, and plan to apply for more grant funding to complete the next 5 miles.

Ultimately, our trails will join the Applegate Ridge Trail. developed and maintained by our sister organization, the Applegate Trails Association (ATA), in partnership with BLM. These two long distance trails and their associated shorter loops will comprise over 90 miles of Oregon that will connect the Pacific Crest Trail at the south end near Ashland, with the communities of Ashland, Jacksonville, and Grants Pass. Oregon.

Texas -

The trail signs will be used for educational purposes on our social media. We are an MPO and do not build trails.

We learned there is conflict between mountain bikers and equestrians who share trails.

We are interested in having the presentation at our Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee meeting. Presentation provided on 6/7/23 BPAC meeting.

Utah -

We are coincidentally evaluating new style of signs when the webinar was announced and presented. We are evaluating what we think will work best. We have other ideas; a sequence of signs with instructions (Berm-a-Shave style) in lieu of one sign.

We have poor signage in several places now.

E-bike riders are clueless.

Thanks to whoever compiled the sheet with various style signs - saves me from doing it.

Washington -

Small area, high use, blind curves, and steep grades make our multi-use trails hazardous if users are unaware. Trail users, especially bikers, need to know to remove the ear buds and safely meet equestrians.

Ontario, Canada -

On a particular section of the Trans Canada trail through Dutton/Dunwich the trails are single tract and used by hikers, equestrians, and the occasional mountain biker. Our committee would like to install a few signs to ensure safe use by all.

The trails are being used by more and different groups-which is great, but our committee would like to be pro-active about being sure users are aware that others are using the trail and the best way to meet and pass other users. As avid trail riders we are aware of issues that have occurred on other multi use trails and know the signs will be beneficial in avoiding adverse interactions between different users.

As you can see, we are a Canadian trail committee. I got information about your web site and group while attending Equine Affaire in Ohio from the Ohio Horseman's Council.

Trail advise from The ABCs of Trail Riding and Horse Camping written by Robert Eversole

This book is an excellent resource and lists many specific reasons of why we need to GET THE WORD OUT and say "hello" when passing each other on the trails.

Page 74 "ETIQUETTE ON THE TRAIL

Here are a few words that go together, peanut butter and jelly, horses and trails, etiquette and safety,

- Etiquette: noun: the rules governing the proper way to behave.
- Safety: noun: the condition of being safe from undergoing or causing hurt, injury, or loss.

Etiquette and safety are partners on the trail. The breach of one can easily create a lack of the other..."

Page 76 "It is important to remember that some people have not had the luxury of your experience with stock and may not know how to act around equines. With a friendly approach, these meetings can be an

opportunity to inform and educate other trail users. Education with friendly respect greatly reduces bad trail encounters for everyone.”

Page 77 “Say Hello – When you run across other trail users, stop and chat. It’s about more than just being friendly; it’s about safety and making people equate equines with positive experiences...

These are just a few examples of safety and etiquette notions that we should keep in mind while we’re on the trail. Remember that although you’ll follow these common -sense guidelines, others may not.

Don’t Let Rogues Get You Down – You may encounter people that haven’t learned simple trail etiquette. You may run into people that feel they have a right to do whatever they want, whenever they want. They are the dregs that make the worst impressions. Keep both eyes open for them for your safety and recognize the many more polite, courteous, and enjoyable people that you’ll encounter. “

Page 124 “HELLO – JUST SAY IT

...A friendly ‘Howdy’ when you meet someone on the trail will help horse riders become everyone’s favorite trail partners. A hello can also help keep you safe...

...a brief chat will also help your horse to understand that the strange lycra-clad beast ahead is indeed just another odd human and not an equine eating creature to fear.

Page 126 “...The vast majority of our trail encounters are pleasant experiences that could be made even better if we take the time to say “Hello” and mean it. Don’t underestimate the power a hello can have on your fellow trail users. A hello costs you nothing yet it brightens the spirits of others and yourself. That’s powerful.”

Safe and happy trails,

Jenny Cook

Michigan Trails Advisory Council Equestrian Representative (MTAC)

SW Michigan Equine Trails Subcommittee Representative (ETS)

mi.trail.rep@gmail.com

Discover the Benefits Horses Hold for You

Discover a treasure, something that is naturally good for you. A **partnership** that can take you across fields, through woods, splashing through water, up and down trails, like you have never traveled before. All while holding you and your actions immediately accountable and naturally expecting you to be the **leader** of this partnership.

“There is something about the outside of a horse that is good for the inside of a man.” Winston S. Churchill

First, it is their **beauty** that attracts us to horses. Then, it is the **empowerment** that we can be the respectful leader of these natural creatures that are faster, larger, stronger, quicker response time, longer endurance, more agile, keener vision, sense of smell, and hearing than us. It helps to learn as much as possible about horses, how they think, communicate, learn, and why they obey us.

Horses are prey animals and all meat-eating creatures, including humans, are their predators. It is quite amazing that we have cultivated a **working, trusting relationship**, and **communication** with horses, who by nature, should be afraid of us. Because of the natural pecking order of predator and prey, horses expect us to be the leaders of our partnerships. Horses are honored to serve us and appreciate when we are **respectful leaders**.

Horses hold us **immediately accountable**. We are entrusting our lives with them and theirs with us. This is a perfect platform for **building trust**. As trust and communication are built, horses can use their **energy to learn and not just to survive**. This is when effective training can take place. Horses can learn many levels of training from beginning to very advanced.

Horses are always **communicating with us** expressed by their body language of head, ears, tail positions, and eye expressions. **It is our responsibility to listen**. When your communication and understanding becomes so fine-tuned, you only need to slightly move your body to give cues and the horses respond. As horses obey and communication is refined, you can **empower them** and allow them to use their gifts to their best ability. This is when you are rewarded for being the respectful leader. **The horse becomes an extension of you**.

Horses do not care if you are young or old, wealthy, or poor. Horses care about **how you handle them**. They will “read” you. They will access your body language, observe your walking stride as you approach them, your tone of voice, heartbeats, touch, and scent. **Horses do not lie**, they give us honest, immediate, tactical, and visual feedback. Horses will react according to your actions and even **mirror your attitude**, giving us a reflection of how we are portraying ourselves to others. We are the leaders of this dance. Treat horses with the honor and dignity they deserve. **Treat them how you would like you to be treated**.

Also, when you are in the presence of horses, you are in present time. You need to handle the task at hand and not to be concerned about anything else. **Present time is a gift**. It can be a vacation or break from your past and a release from the worries of tomorrow. Horses use their past experiences as knowledge to survive the present moment. They learn from their past and go forward. We can learn from how horses live in the moment. Start making and enjoying positive moments and memories. **Enjoy the moment**.

Horses are **declared Equine Assisted Services (EAS)**. This allows people with physical, cognitive, behavioral, or emotional challenges to find strength, healing and independence through the power and connection with the horse. There are many horse therapy organizations across Michigan that provide useful horse therapy services for people. Kalamazoo is home of the Veterinary Medicine Research and Development (VMRD) division of the world's leading animal health company, Zoetis Animal Health. Many Zoetis employees own horses and support equine health and the equine industry. Zoetis became the Official Equine Health & Wellness Partner of PATH Intl. in 2022, which allows them to support this important organization at the national level. This sponsorship in turn allows PATH Intl. to continue guiding and supporting over 800 horse farms offering EAS as PATH Intl Member Centers, thanks to 7,000 equines! This incredible work impacts 53,000 men, women, and children (including 6,000 veterans) in areas of physical well-being, learning and developmental disabilities, as well as mental health challenges, trauma recovery, and at-risk youth. Kalamazoo has a proud history in the development and use of therapeutic riding. Kalamazoo County's Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center, <https://www.cheffcenter.org>, is a world-renowned model, celebrating over 50 years of smiles, laughter, horses, healing, and fun by serving riders of all ages who have physical, emotional, or cognitive disabilities. Mental health, in general, is a significant concern in all of society – promotion of equestrian activities is a great way to add positive support to our community options. Medical research has found **substantial health benefits** for people when they are near horses including, but not limited to; coherent heartbeat, right and left brain unison functions, creating strong neuropathways, awakening the brain, providing avenues for learning, allowing better and easier focus and recall, building balance, confidence, coordination, decision making, empathy, emotion regulation, flexibility, goal setting, kindness, muscle strengthening, patience, problem solving skills, self-awareness, self-discipline, verbal and non-verbal communication skills and stamina. While decreasing anger, anxiety, blood pressure, depression, hostility, tension, and cortisol levels indicating stress hormones. **Horses are healthy for people.**

Horses' body shape and bone structures are **physically designed to fit us perfectly**. They simulate our walking, jogging, and running strides. Horses can carry 20% of their body weight or about 220 lbs. They can pull up to twice their body weight or about 2200 lbs. They are useful partners for all therapeutic activity including emotional, mental, physical, and substance abuse. Every previous generation recognized the benefits of horses and used them for hunting, industry, military, pleasure, sport, and transportation. **Horses are gifts we shouldn't ignore. Horses should be welcomed and celebrated.**

"The horse is the noblest of all domesticated animals. He seems to have been expressly made for the service of man, and his beauty, knowledge, strength, and intrepid spirit, combined with his extreme docility, naturally renders him his faithful ally in all his pursuits, both for industry and pleasure." Edward Neddo, Veterinary Surgeon 1881.

Discover your treasure today!

Jenny Cook

Michigan Trails Advisory Council Equestrian Representative (MTAC)

SW Michigan Equine Trails Subcommittee Representative (ETS)

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Check out Michigan Horse Trails Directory for horseback riding trails, camping, events, horse rentals, and volunteer horse associations. <http://michiganhorsetrails.com/>

When you encounter people with horses, please follow the Trails Safe Passing Plan (TSPP) Stop! Speak and Stand Back.



Please Remember The Trails Safe Passing Plan Stop! Speak and Stand Back



STOP:

Horses are prey animals and naturally can be afraid of unfamiliar people and objects. People with horses should pass at a walk while other trail users remain STOPPED, until passed. When approaching horses from behind, please STOP! SPEAK to announce your location and pass slowly when the people with horses are prepared. STOPPING allows TIME for everyone to prepare for safe trail passing.

SPEAK:

Please ANNOUNCE your presence.
Please SAY "Hi" when we pass by.
Speaking helps horses identify you as a person and will help keep them calm.

STAND BACK:

Please STAND BACK with your whole group on the same side of the trail.
Please contain children and dogs.
Please do not hide or stand behind a tree, as these actions may cause horses to fear you are a predator planning an attack.

SMILE:

Enjoy the safe, happy trails! Please contact the Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council for the use of the Stop! Speak and Stand Back sign at: RFVHC.Colorado@gmail.com

Thank you for following the Trails Safe Passing Plan (TSPP) Stop! Speak and Stand Back and learning about the natural instincts and gifts of horses. Understanding these horse facts will drive out fears of horses, give compassion and respect for horses and people with horses, and provide a plan of action when you encounter horses and people with horses. Please register with the Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council of Aspen/Snowmass, Colorado for the use of the Trails Safe Passing Plan (TSPP) Stop! Speak and Stand Back sign <https://www.rfvhorsecouncil.org/rfvhc.Colorado@gmail.com>

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For more information about equine access to public trails, visit www.elcr.org

Results of Environmental Horse Studies:

- Environmental Aspects of Horses on Trails - American Trails
<https://www.americantrails.org/resources/environmental-aspects-of-horses-on-trails>
- Horse Manure on Hiking Trails: A Nonissue - Kentucky Equine Research
<https://ker.com/equinews/horse-manure-hiking-trails-nonissue/>
- Getting Real About Horses and Trails
<https://www.gmhainc.org/getting-real-horses-trails/>
- Horses as Trail Users
<https://www.americantrails.org/resources/horses-as-trail-users>
- Horse Manure on the Trails: Should we do something?
<https://elcr.org/horse-manure-on-the-trails-should-we-do-something/>
- Understanding the Trail Horse – Our Heritage in Horses
[Horse-Manure-on-the-Trails-by-Lyndall-Erb2-2019-002.pdf \(elcr.org\)](https://elcr.org/Horse-Manure-on-the-Trails-by-Lyndall-Erb2-2019-002.pdf)

Studies Indicating Horses Are Good for People:

- Using Equine Therapy as Mental Health Treatment
<https://www.verywellmind.com/equine-therapy-mental-health-treatment-4177932>
- Horses Are Confirmed Therapy for Military Veterans with PTSD
<https://blog.theanimalrescuesite.greatergood.com/ptsd-horse-therapy/>
- Horses Reduce Stress in Children
<https://www.horsejournals.com/popular/horse-industry/horses-reduce-stress-children>
- Why Kids Should Ride
<https://horseandrider.com/western-horse-life/why-kids-should-ride>
- Veterans, experts say horse therapy shows promise as PTSD treatment
<https://www.foxnews.com/health/horsetherapy-ptsd-help-veterans-experts>
- The Therapeutic Value of Horses
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/ending-addiction-good/201708/the-therapeutic-value-horses>
- MSU Extension: The science behind equine-assisted therapy and what benefits riders take from the experience.
https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/the_science_behind_equine_assisted_activities_and_therapeutic_riding_part_i
- Horses Change the Brain Wave Patterns of Humans
https://horsereflections.com.au/b612428ae64b506933cc32800504a640b9b71361ecd3ababfa854a24f25b7f74postnameb6_12428ae64b506933cc32800504a640b9b71361ecd3ababfa854a24f25b7f74/horses-change-brain-wave-patterns/

- Equine-Assisted Therapy: Physical and Emotional Benefits
<https://www.zarebasystems.com/articles/equine-assisted-therapy>
- Healing through horses: Equine therapy at Midland's Remnant Fields
<https://www.secondwavemedia.com/midland/features/remnant-fields-equine-therapy-05-219.aspx>

Horses and Trail Use:

- History of horses and trails:
<https://www.americantrails.org/resources/horsepower-where-it-all-started>
- Economic output of outdoor recreation of equestrians:
<http://www.motherlodetrails.org/alerts/us-bureau-reports-economic-output-of-outdoor-recreation-at-386-billion>
- Equestrian Trail Riders Lifestyle:
<https://www.americantrails.org/resources/the-equestrian-trail-riders-lifestyle>
- How horses learn and react:
<https://crissimcdonald.com/2019/07/20/your-horse-isnt-distracted/>
- Trail Love -Trail Etiquette Suggestions -YouTube
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKR6WQTjR-I>
- Horses as Trail Users:
<https://www.americantrails.org/resources/horses-as-trail-user>

ORVAW Report

- On the topic of purchasing used grading equipment from snowmobile grooming it was noted that internal reviews are taking place with in the DNR on the matter, funding language to allow this to happen is one concern.
- ORV sunset bill has not moved at the time of the meeting.
- Connector USFS routes in the central UP in the Hiawatha national forest have been approved and more are being looked at in the region.
- Lake linden trail reconstruction has been sent out for bid hopeful for a completion date of mid November 2023, Open for ORV in 2024
- HB4459 which is a bill to limit ORV use in the winter on current winter approved ORV trails was added to agenda for vote of opposing the bill as currently written, it was 100% voted as not in favor of the bill by all members in attendance. Some reason given for the disapproval was it limits trail access for outdoorsman to ice fish and hunt that have been used for decades, limits access for towns that depend on ORV riders for income in what has been very low snow winters and the law is for the most part difficult to enforce.

6/27/23

Michael Maves